

Dr. Ing. Joseph Turbang,  
6, rue Haute,  
6700 Toernich (Arlon)  
Belgium

12th December 2004

Dear Harish Kapadia

I have been a member of the Himalayan Club and reader of the Himalayan Journal for many years. Fortunately my first experience with FAO (UN) was in the field of Watershed Management in the Damodar valley in Bihar (India) where I walked with high level Indian technicians. I was stationed in Hazaribagh where I could live happily far away from the noisy world. Then I was transferred to Nepal while there were no regular flights (late 50's.) I took a memorable DC3 from Indian Airlines out of Patna after we had waited for several days for the weather to clear up. Early sixties I was transferred to FAO regional office in Bangkok with numerous missions to India and the Himalayan areas, where trekking was my favourite. In Nepal we carried out a big watershed project in the Tirsuli valley. Out of Shimla (India) I travelled with my friend Major Singh, Chief Conservator of Forest, later posted in Chandigadh, to the Shipki pass area and several other valley.

In the seventies I travelled and trekked with my colleague Mr Mullick, Conservator of Forest in Kullu over the Rohtang pass into the Lahaul-Spiti. While staying in the forest bungalow in Manali I met with our friend John Banon. How is he ?<sup>1</sup> I well remember a trip with Maj. Singh out of Shimla travelling through a valley north where we visited a wonderful palace all in wood, which I understand was destroyed by fire later on. Could you remember of it?<sup>2</sup> The flora of the Himalaya was most interesting. But also while there I collected some nuts (Kashmir, Kullu valley.....) and as a result, I have in Belgium (the Ardennes) about a dozen walnut trees from India about 15 m high and producing a crop every year. A loving souvenir from this unique mountain range.

Late sixties I was appointed head of the forestry division in the regional office in Bangkok, which I left in early retirement in late eighties,

---

1 John Banon lives in Manali running beautiful hotel.

2 It was 'Wild Flower Hall. made of wood. It is reconstructed and is now a very expensive hotel.

but still continued part time until 1997 in the area. You may understand how much I appreciate receiving regularly the Himalayan Journal and also the volume 58 for which I am grateful to you and the Club.

About old memories, I remember still having met Noel Odell for the last time in 1978 in Delhi. Did the *HJ* published some report since Mallory's body was found?<sup>3</sup> Finally, I may also tell you I have known quite well Peter Aufchneiter who had been associated with FAO in Nepal. I met him last on 12 October 1967 near Jawa lake in Nepal where he stayed with the Swiss Mission.

Regards,

Dr. Ing. Joseph Turbang,

---

<sup>3</sup> Alas no, but there are several books on the subject which HJ reviewed in detail.